



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

News Release

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CALI CARTEL LEADER MAKES INITIAL APPEARANCE IN FEDERAL COURT FOLLOWING SURRENDER TO UNITED STATES AUTHORITIES

Miami- R. Alexander Acosta, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, Jesus Torres, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and Mark R. Trouville, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), announced that defendant, William Rodriguez-Abadia, is scheduled to make his initial appearance in federal court today in Miami, Florida, before Magistrate Judge Robert L. Dubé, following his voluntary surrender to United States to face drug trafficking, money laundering, obstruction of justice, and racketeering conspiracy charges pending against him in the Southern District of Florida.

William Rodriguez-Abadia is one of the leaders of the infamous Cali Drug Cartel. He is the son of Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela and the nephew of Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela, who are the alleged founders of the Cali Cartel. All three men are named in a Superseding Indictment, along with eight (8) other defendants. The other named defendants are Luis Eduardo Cuartas-Soriano, Guillermo Restrepo Lara, Heriberto Patino-Rios, Luis Ocampo-Fomeque, German Navarro Palau, Daniel Serrano Gomez, Harold Velez-Restrepo, and Luis Evelio Restrepo Bermudes. Trial is set for September 2006 before United States District Court Judge Federico A. Moreno.

The Superseding Indictment charges all of the named defendants with conspiracy to import cocaine and conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute cocaine. More specifically, the Superseding Indictment charges that from 1990 until July 2002, the defendants conspired to import more than 200,000 kilograms of cocaine into the United States, and conspired to possess with intent to distribute that cocaine. According to the charges, the defendants imported and distributed cocaine hidden within concrete posts, frozen vegetables, pumpkins, lumber, ceramic tile, coffee, chlorine cylinders, and other materials. The Superseding Indictment also charges defendants Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela, as well as Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela, William Rodriguez-Abadia, Luis Eduardo Cuartas-Soriano, German Navarro Palau, Daniel Serrano Gomez, and Harold Velez-Restrepo, with conspiracy to launder money and with conspiracy to obstruct justice.

In addition to the drug trafficking, money laundering, and obstruction of justice charges, the Superseding Indictment seeks the forfeiture of two billion, one hundred million dollars in United

States currency (\$2,100,000,000), which represents moneys received in exchange for and used to facilitate the distribution of controlled substances and the amount of money involved in the money laundering conspiracy.

If convicted on the conspiracy drug trafficking charges, Rodriguez-Abadia would face a maximum statutory sentence of life imprisonment on each count. If convicted on the conspiracy money laundering charge, Rodriguez-Abadia would face a maximum statutory sentence of twenty (20) years' imprisonment. If convicted on the conspiracy to obstruct justice charge, Rodriguez-Abadia would face a maximum statutory sentence of five (5) years' imprisonment.

The charged conspiracy encompasses one of the largest narcotics and money laundering organizations ever prosecuted in the United States. The amount of cocaine imported and distributed in the United States, the amount of money laundered, and the violence associated with the various members of the Cartel, make the Cali Cartel one of the most prolific and violent organizations ever prosecuted in the United States.

Rodriguez-Abadia is additionally charged in a separate indictment pending before Judge Hoeveler. In that case, Rodriguez-Abadia is charged with racketeering conspiracy (Count 1); conspiracy to import cocaine (Count 3); conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute cocaine (Count 4); and conspiracy to launder money (Count 9).

United States Attorney Acosta stated, "The surrender of William Rodriguez-Abadia in Miami to face the federal criminal narcotics charges against him is a reminder to all narcotics traffickers that they cannot hide or run from prosecution. The United States Attorney's Office and our federal law enforcement partners, in this case ICE and DEA, remain focused in our efforts to stop narco-traffickers and the influx of illegal drugs into South Florida. Our resolve and commitment remain unshaken. We will bring drug dealers to justice."

In addition, United States Attorney Acosta specifically recognized the hard work and cooperation of the two primary agencies responsible for this monumental investigation and today's surrender of the remaining fugitive. Acosta stated, "Without the collective efforts of the ICE and DEA agents this case could not have been indicted. The agents have sacrificed countless hours of their personal time to ensure that the criminal acts of this trafficking organization were punished to the full extent of the law. It is the behind the scenes work of these men and women that we have to be thankful for. Their dedication and hard work makes our job as the in Court representative of the people of the Southern District of Florida that much easier."

"The U.S. government has been working tirelessly for over a decade to reach the core of the Cali Cartel and dismantle their organization," said Jesus Torres, Special Agent in Charge for ICE in Miami. "This case is a testament to the dedication and close cooperation between ICE, the DEA and the U.S. Attorney's Office. Drug traffickers worldwide should know that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will continue working with its law enforcement partners to prevent their poison from reaching our communities and violating our national security."

Mark R. Trouville, Special Agent in Charge for the Drug Enforcement Administration, stated, "I would like to thank our domestic and international law enforcement partners for their efforts in helping us pursue justice regardless of international borders. We have long considered the Cali

Cartel one of the largest drug trafficking organizations in operation. It has been a top priority of the DEA to dismantle this organization. Working jointly with ICE we have achieved this goal."

Mr. Acosta commended the investigative efforts of ICE and DEA. The case is being prosecuted by Special Litigation Counsel Richard Gregorie, Special Assistant United States Attorney Edward Ryan, Assistant United States Attorney Matthew Axelrod, and Assistant United States Attorney Lisa Hirsch.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.